

Application No.: 09/849,530

Docket No.: FIS919980172US2  
20136-00344-US**REMARKS**

Claims 15-30 are now in the application. The indication that claims 19 and 22-25 contain allowable subject matter is hereby noted with appreciation. The recent telephone interview with Examiner Maldonado is hereby acknowledged. As discussed during the telephone interview, claim 15 has been amended by deleting the recitation to "copper germanide". Accordingly, claim 15 now recites "a germanium-containing layer of at least one member selected from the group consisting of germanium oxide, germanium nitride and combinations thereof". Claims 19 and 22-25 which included recitations to germanium oxide and/or germanium nitride were deemed to be allowable.

The amendment to claim 15 does not introduce any new matter or raise any new issues.

Claims 15, 16 and 26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102 (e) as being anticipated by and claims 17, 18, 20, 21 and 27 were rejected as being obvious under 35 U.S.C. §103 (a) over U.S. Patent 6,143,657 to Liu et al. Claims 28-30 were rejected as being obvious under 35 U.S.C. §103 (a) over U.S. Patent 6,143,657 to Liu et al. in view of the Admitted State of the Art.

These rejections are not deemed to be obviated by the above amendment to claim 15.

In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to pass this application to issue.

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Please charge any additional fees or credit any overpayment to our Deposit Account No. 22-0185, under Order No. 20136-00344-US from which the undersigned is authorized to draw.

Dated: 4-13-04

Respectfully submitted,

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